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BETTER COUNTRY LIVING IN 1938

A radio discussion among Dr. C. W. Warburton, Director of Federal Extension Service; Miss Madge J. Reese, Miss Florence Hall, Miss Grace Frysinger, and Mrs. Ola Powell Malcolm, regional supervisors of home economics extension work; and Wallace Kadderly, Radio Service, United States Department of Agriculture, broadcast in the Home Demonstration Day program of the National Farm and Home Program Wednesday, December 7, 1938, by the National Broadcasting Company and a network of 99 associated radio stations.

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PART I

KADDERLY:

Here we are in Washington. Several USDA people are in this studio -- Director Warburton who heads up the Extension Service of the Department and four women who are regional supervisors of home economics extension work: Miss Madge J. Reese, Miss Florence Hall, Miss Grace Frysinger, and Mrs. Ola Powell Malcolm....all of the Federal Extension Service.

We are approaching the end of another year, and it's time for a nation-wide review of home demonstration work sponsored by the United States Department of Agriculture and the State Agricultural Colleges....and serving rural families from all levels of income and all levels of social well being....in every State, and in Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico.

Now, looking back over the year of 1938 what would you say are some of the outstanding things that have been accomplished?

WARBURTON:

Wallace, that's a question I'd like to ask each of the million rural home-makers who are members of home demonstration clubs. We can't do that. So let's put your question to the four women who are here in the studio. And then, later, we'll hear from four rural homemakers.

Miss Reese, what are some of the things that rural women in the West say about home demonstration work?

REESE:

They tell me it helps them to make the most of what they have. It solves practical daily homemaking problems.

WARBURTON:

That's important.

REESE:

It encourages women to work together. It develops leadership among farm women. In Oregon and Utah last year, farm men and women worked together in Agricultural Planning Conferences. In several of the Western States, as in other States, "Live-at-Home" campaigns were emphasized.

WARBURTON:

"Live-at-Home". By that, do you mean the growing of food on the farm for family consumption?

REESE:

Yes, growing it and preserving it. Thousands of farm women are providing their families with an adequate, balanced diet and growing most of the food on the farm. In 1937 more than half a million farm families in the United States planned, produced and preserved the home food supply, following suggestions of home demonstration agents.

WARBURTON:

Extremely important because the results are two fold -- better health and reduced cash expenditure for food.

Now we'll go to the Central States. Miss Frysinger --

FRYSINGER:

I'd like to suggest that rural women also are improving community living.

For instance, the nutrition work carries over into well-planned community meals.....and into hot school lunches in thousands of rural schools. Last year in Missouri alone hot school lunches were introduced in 563 rural schools through the efforts of rural women.

WARBURTON:

Very encouraging.

FRYSINGER:

Rural women are making a fine contribution to rural health, too. They sponsor health examinations and immunization.

WARBURTON:

What about community fun?

FRYSINGER:

They aren't overlooking that! They put on plays and pageants, and organize choruses and orchestras.

And we must remember that during 1937 rural women throughout the United States helped to obtain library service in more than 4000 communities. And helped to beautify more than 4600 school and other community grounds.

WARBURTON:

Very good. Now Mrs. Malcolm, I've heard a lot about home markets in the South. What can you tell us about them?

MALCOLM:

For instance, farm women in North Carolina have 40 markets with a membership numbering more than 1500. In South Carolina, there are 28 club markets in 27 counties operated by farm home-makers. One year's sales at these markets in Alabama totaled over 1,000,826 dollars. Tennessee, Florida and the other Southern States have farm women's markets where they turn garden, poultry and home-made products into cash.

Director Warburton, there is another important phase of home demonstration work that we haven't yet mentioned.

WARBURTON:

What is that, Mrs. Malcolm?

MALCOLM:

Home improvement including home furnishings. Last year more than 250,000 farm women made their homes more attractive, convenient and comfortable. They re-upholstered and re-finished all types of furniture made studio couches, mattresses, quilts and slip covers. In Arkansas alone farm women utilized 500,000 pounds of home-grown cotton in mattresses and upholstering chairs and sofas.

WARBURTON:

That's good.

Now, Miss Hall, we haven't heard from you. How goes home demonstration work in the Eastern States?

HALL:

Well, Director Warburton, there is one line of work in particular that hasn't been mentioned. Farm families are opening their homes to tourists and have turned to the Extension Service for suggestions.

WARBURTON:

That impresses me as an interesting way for farm families in States like Maine and New Hampshire to add to the family income.

HALL:

Oh! this business is not limited to New England. Farm people in other States keep tourists, too. I know a Maryland woman who always has a well-stocked food shelf -- with plenty of dressed chickens on hand in the refrigerator. One Sunday, last summer, she served a party of 40 -- without advance warning.

WARBURTON:

Forty! And some husbands get in bad if they bring home one or two friends for dinner unexpectedly.

HALL:

Well, this is different and please don't think I'm even suggesting that serving meals unexpectedly is to be taken lightly.

WARBURTON:

Let's see now --- none of you women has said a word about the clothing work. That's surprising.

HALL:

We've been saving that.

WARBURTON:

Better not save it too long. We're going to hear from the farm women very shortly.

HALL:

The clothing work has been a life saver to many farm families. Last year the estimated savings to rural people as a result of this work was more than two

and a half million dollars! Thousands of farm women make most of their own clothes these days. Under Extension guidance, they even make winter coats. In New Hampshire the average cost of the coats the women made last year was \$6.80 each. The saving in many cases was as high as \$20 a coat.

WARBURTON:

No wonder the clothing work is popular. But, Wallace, isn't it about time to hear from the homemakers themselves?

KADDERLY:

Yes, it is, Director Warburton. And we shall hear first from Mrs. Gordon Slade of Vermont. For Mrs. Slade's message, we take you now to New York.

(There follows talks by four homemakers, with music by the Homesteaders. Return to Washington at 1:05)

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BETTER COUNTRY LIVING IN 1938

PART II

KADDERLY:

Here we are back in Washington -- back to the Federal Extension Service workers headed by Director Warburton.

WARBURTON:

Speaking for myself -- and I'm sure also for Miss Reese, Miss Frysinger, Miss Hall and Mrs. Malcolm -- this swing around the country to hear from homemakers themselves has been a most enlightening experience. I always marvel at the magic of radio.

KADDERLY:

Amen to that, Director Warburton.

Well, Farm and Home friends, Director C. W. Warburton, head of the Extension Service of the United States Department of Agriculture -- and the four regional home demonstration supervisors are ready to continue their review of home demonstration activities.

I believe, Director Warburton, that you're going to tell now of some of the newer trends in home demonstration work.

WARBURTON:

That's right, Wallace -- and one of those trends is the emphasis being placed on family living. Mrs. Reeds of Oklahoma brought that out --- vividly -- a few moments ago.

KADDERLY:

She certainly did --- and I liked Everett Mitchell's comment on her story --- when he said the Farm and Home unit demonstration is an "amalgamation of interests on the farm and in the home."

WARBURTON:

Yes, there is a growing realization that the farm and the home are inseparable.

MALCOLM:

Family cooperation in the introduction of better business methods in farming and homemaking is contributing a great deal to better farm life.

WARBURTON:

No doubt of it, Mrs. Malcolm.

Other agencies that contribute to that objective, too, don't they, Miss Reese?

REESE:

Yes, rural electrification, for instance.

Last year --- in 1937 --- about 100,000 miles of electric lines were built in rural communities. And some 200,000 farm homes enjoyed for the first time the convenience and comforts that electricity provides.

FRYSINGER:

Illinois has certainly made a remarkable record.

WARBURTON:

How is that, Miss Frysinger?

FRYSINGER:

Well, in 1934, two miles of rural electric lines were built in Illinois. Just two miles. And they served 17 customers. Since 1934 more than 9000 miles of electric lines were built --- to serve 25,000 customers.

WARBURTON:

That is a big increase.

FRYSINGER:

Yes, 22 per cent of Illinois farms now have electricity.

WARBURTON:

The Extension Service has welcomed this opportunity to cooperate with the REA, TVA and private utilities.

FRYSINGER:

This expansion has brought new responsibilities for home demonstration agents, too. Rural women everywhere wanted to know all sorts of things about electrical equipment -- what to buy --- how to use it --- how to take care of it.

WARBURTON:

I can see how that would be. What's another new trend?

MALCOLM:

Consumer education --- helping farm families to get the best possible value for their money.

WARBURTON:

Spending dollars wisely is as important as earning dollars, Mrs. Malcolm.

MALCOLM:

Yes, and interest in this field is increasing among home demonstration club members. They are studying how to buy wisely - food - clothing - furniture. On shopping tours arranged for them by extension agents, home-makers see the merchandise and hear store managers and buyers explain points to consider in selection.

WARBURTON:

In other words -- practical experience in spending money wisely.

HALL:

There's a good illustration of that in New York State.

A store in Buffalo offered home demonstration club members the use of the store's model home for a week. These women re-decorated the rooms with furnishings selected from the store.

WARBURTON:

That was a golden opportunity, Miss Hall. Did the women take advantage of it?

HALL:

Well, yes.

More than a hundred of them gained experience in selecting articles, rugs, furniture, curtains and accessories; in discarding the undesirable, and finally selecting the most suitable. About 1200 of their fellow club members came to view this exhibit house when it was completed.

WARBURTON:

Well, we have very briefly discussed three newer trends in home demonstration work --- rural electrification, consumer education, and the farm and home as a unit in working and living. There are other trends I wish we could bring up --- child development, remodeling and beautifying homes, farm women's camps, but time is fleeting. So, we must say goodbye to all of you Farm and Home listeners. It was a privilege to tell you about some of the things that rural families are doing in cooperation with our Federal and State Extension Services. I sincerely hope that we can have this kind of a round-up every year.

KADDERLY:

SO say we all, Director Warburton.

Farm and Home friends, this program has brought out some of the activities that when taken together mean "home demonstration work" --- a nation-wide system of homemaking education carried on by the United States Department of Agriculture and the State colleges of agriculture. The local representative of this system is the county home demonstration agent.

The Washington, D. C. participants in this program were Miss Madge Reese, Miss Grace Frysinger, Miss Florence Hall, Mrs. Ola Powell Malcolm, and Director Clyde W. Warburton -- representing the Extension Service of the Department of Agriculture.

We return you now to Chicago.

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